



CHALLENGES FOR QUALITY TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE PRESENT SCENARIO

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Abstract

The progress of a nation always depends on knowledge acquired through education and its sensible application. To improve the quality of education, teacher education is a significant vehicle. Teacher education in India is facing a number of challenges in the way of its qualitative development. This article attempts at making contributions to the ongoing debates in the challenges and quality of teacher education. We require quality teachers who are dedicated to teaching and outfitted with essential knowledge, skills and competencies for effective teaching to deliver excellent education and to fulfill the needs of society. In this age of liberalization, globalization and privatization to enhance the quality of teacher education is a challenging task.

Keywords: Globalization, Liberalization, NCTE, Privatization, Teacher Education.

Introduction

Teachers play a vital role in helping people to fulfill their potential for personal growth and well-being. The role of teacher is changing so fast that no amount of pre-service or in-service teacher education can probably cope with the expectations of the society. Teaching can be said a jugglery of words, which needs to be practised through proper training, acquisition of various skills, competencies and relevant knowledge about the learners and the subject matter in the contemporary world.

Education in 21st Century is a challenge to excellence in very endeavor. More and more vibrant areas of education have already come under the purview of teaching and learning. The use of technology have made education interesting and thrilling to the teachers as well as learners. The inclusion of sex education, health education, value education and inclusive education have attained immense public attention in the professional training of teachers right from the school level. Today, we need well qualified and well prepared teachers who do not have only academic and professional competencies of high standard but also earnest responsibility and commitment to strive

constantly to raise student's learning, capacity and achievements so as to make them increasingly autonomous and self-actualizing persons [1]. The quality of the nation depends upon the quality of its citizens and the quality of its citizens depends upon the quality of education. The quality of education depends upon the quality of teachers on which the quality of community, society and nation depends. competencies of the teachers in the classroom are the most important component in supporting a system of education. It has been rightly said that teachers can craft or blight a nation.

The Education Commission (1964-66) stated that a sound programme of professional education of teachers is necessary for qualitative improvement of education. It emphasized that investment in teacher education can yield very rich dividends because the financial resources required are small when measured against the resulting improvements in education of millions [2]. The National Policy on Education (1986) also stated that the status of teachers reflects the socio-cultured ethos of society; it is said that no person can rise above the level of his/her teachers [3]. The government and community should endeavor to create conditions, which will help to motivate and inspire teachers on constructive and creative lines. The concerns present by the Education Commission (1964-66) and National Policy On Education (1986) are still relevant today. National Knowledge Commission (2007) and National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2009) have suggested that a teacher needs to be prepared in relation to the needs and demands arising in the school context. It has also become necessary to raise the professional competency of teachers keeping in view the geographical, social, economic gender and cultural diversities of the country in general and states in particular.

Teacher Education: An Overview

Education today is under constraints and challenges and so is the teacher education. Teacher education is perhaps more confronted with how to negotiate and significantly address the world of teaching-learning than merely dealing with duties, responsibilities and classroom assignments. It is now at the fork of fullness of vision in a fascinated world of



immediate gain in every endeavor and worries in fruitless teaching and creative adventure. Education of teachers need to strengthen and stress upon the main attributes of a profession, such as the systematic theory, rigorous training over a specified duration, authority, community sanction, ethical code and culture, generating knowledge through research and specialization. It is already acknowledge that formal professional training for continuous basis is necessary for becoming a good teacher.

Need And Importance of Teacher Education

According to traditional Indian culture, a child receives his physical birth from the parents and second birth at the hands of the teacher. The teacher is given a higher position than parents, because he opens the pupil's eyes of knowledge and moulds his character. As it is said that God created man after. His own image, so also the teacher fashions his student after his own image.

In the Western world also, the teacher is given great regards, Adam said, "A teacher affects eternity, he can never tell where his influence stops". The role of teacher and his/her education is the foundations on which the superstructure of the education of a country is based. Besides the initial premonitions of teachers the teacher of education also includes the programmes for further education of teachers already engaged in the teaching profession and with the assumption that the teaching activity can be definitely improved after undergoing such programmes. The task of teacher is not only confined to preserve, interpret and transmit the culture to the coming generation, but also to bring about social change. They need to work as active agents in ushering forth-new social order based on equality, liberty and justice.

The contemporary teacher education though has grown manifold over the decades, but is overshadowed by severe criticism for being static and unresponsive to the emerging challenges of the present time. The knowledge, skills and methodologies propagated by the system remain alien and never get assimilated in the school system. Teacher education continues to be viewed in isolation, disconnected from other factors that shape the role and performance of a teacher such as recruitment, salary, working conditions and overall professional development. Over the

years, few initiatives have been taken for betterment but results are not convincing. Quality improvement of our teacher education programme is one of the indispensable needs that call for immediate attention. Undoubtedly, the quality of school education is the direct consequence and outcome of the quality of teachers and the teacher education system. More so. in this era of globalization, teachers are exposed to increasingly challenging changes, uncertainties and expectations as they perform their professional duties. In addition to teaching, they are often required to take up expanded roles and responsibilities related to school management, curriculum planning, teacher mentoring, etc. In such a complex environment, effective career-long teacher development programmes that build teacher capacities and professional competencies are of crucial importance to quality education. All this implies the 'Central position' occupied by the teacher who is seen as essentially a means-ends broker and teaching is conceived as a technical exercise, an applied science. concerned with and according to the criteria of means-end efficiency. Hence, a strategic vision towards quality teacher education is essential to transform teacher education as a strategy in itself. Teacher education as a continuous process needs prioritization to implement an alternative paradigm for quality teacher education. The school community and the teacher training institutions have to move towards building a shared commitment for a paradigm shift in teacher education [4].

Challenges for Quality Teacher Education in Present Scenario

Teacher education is involved in the process of preparing teachers and supports them throughout their carriers. Teacher Education institutions in India spread over all the states and union territories. These institutions are conducting teacher education programs to prepare teachers for our schools. Though the quality of the teacher education programs surpasses the quality component in certain aspects, how can the quality be assured. The quality of teacher education of our country is not satisfactory. This may be due to lack of focus on providing meaningful experiences to pupil teachers. However NCTE has made provisions for the improvement in quality of



teacher education programs. Still we are facing some challenges. Which are enlisted as under.

Incompetency of Pupil Teachers

Quality teacher-Education must be able to prepare ideal-teachers who are competent and capable of bringing about all round development of their students.

Superficial practice teaching

In teacher education institutes, most of students often focus on superficial features of practice teaching instead of the underlying principles, concepts or theories. So when a new situation arises, they either lack the general concept or lack the skill of identifying key ideas involved in the principle. Our pupil teacher must avoid superficial practice teaching. Teacher education institutes must focus on the skill based teaching practices.

Problem of Supervision of teaching

Teacher educators must supervise the teaching sessions of pupil-teachers. Simulation lessons, Discussion lessons and ordinary lesson plans and field work need more concentration.

Lack of Professional development programs

Progressive carries of student teaches and teacher educations needs the organization of professional development programs

Poor Academic Background of student-teachers

Students with poor academic background who entering in the teacher education programs are the big threat to quality education.

Lack of Infrastructural, Instructional and human Resources facilities.

To maintain quality in teacher education three factors i.e. infrastructure, instructional and human resources are required. If these requirements are provided to each teacher education institutes, the quality development is possible.

Narrow scope of teacher education

Limited or narrow scope of teacher education programs reduces the quality of pre-service education programs. It has resulted in sub-standard institutions of teacher education. Lack of support system also affects the scope of teacher education programs.

Lack of culture-specific Pedagogy

Pedagogical theory enables the teachers to have a sound basis for practicing the teaching skills in the classroom. Therefore lack of specific pedagogical theories reduces the capabilities of learners.

Dominance of Teacher-Centered Strategies

Teacher-centered strategies are not suitable for the existing curriculum for the teaching training institutions.

Lack of up to date books and material on teacher education.

It lowers the quality of teacher-education programs.

Value-Erosion

Value erosion among the students are matter of concern today. Teachers need to be trained for inculcating values in their students.

Suggestions for Qualitative Development of Teacher Education

1. Enhance the institutional capacities for meeting the requirements related to infrastructure, instructional and human resources.
2. Organization of professional development programs like seminars, conferences, refresher courses and orientation programs.
3. Make effective use of ICT in order to facilitate continuous learning by teachers without requiring them to be away from the workplace.
4. Stress on value-oriented education.
5. Student teachers should be given opportunity to evaluate themselves.
6. Poor academic background of the student-teachers must be checked.
7. Teacher educators and student teachers must be equipped with good text books.
8. Emphasis must be laid on practical training.

On the whole it should be an outlook in every student teacher that teaching is not only a profession but a mission also.

Conclusion

The quality of teachers determines the quality of education which in turn is directly linked to a nation's development. Therefore care should be taken in providing quality education to future teachers. Continuous professional development of teachers educators and student teachers is necessary through activity based programs from time to time.

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